



August 26, 2013

Honorable Martin Causer
41B East Wing
PO Box 202067
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Honorable Ron Miller
115 Ryan Office Building
PO Box 202093
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Chairmen Causer and Miller:

On behalf of the collective membership of the Marcellus Shale Coalition (MSC), Associated Petroleum Industries of Pennsylvania (API-PA) and the Pennsylvania Independent Oil & Gas Association (PIOGA), we offer our support of HB 1576. We commend Representative Pyle for his Endangered Species Coordination Act legislation as it would introduce consistency, transparency and accountability to threatened and endangered species conservation and management while also allowing sustainable economic development across the Commonwealth.

There are four major components to this legislation. HB 1576 would standardize the listing and management of threatened and endangered species by establishing a rulemaking process, consolidating the information into a centralized database managed by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), granting access to the information to persons required to consider the impacts that a project could have or to those involved in conservation efforts and protecting sensitive data by prohibiting the disclosure of the information to anyone not involved in a development or conservation project.

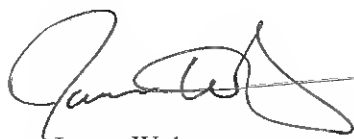
By applying the standard Commonwealth rulemaking procedures, already used by DCNR, to the Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commission, when they are undertaking the designation of Pennsylvania threatened and Pennsylvania endangered species and their habitats, the bill ensures government transparency and accountability through the established regulatory review process which provides for public notice and comment. Standard rulemaking procedures would also apply to the designation of a stream or stream segment as a wild trout stream. Importantly, this bill would require that empirical data and science are used to support these designations. We endorse an open and transparent designation process which includes the necessary checks and balances and is best achieved through the regulatory review process.

We support the establishment of a centralized database managed by DCNR as the most efficient and effective way to consolidate all of the information necessary for threatened and endangered species conservation and management. We also support providing access to the data for those required to consider the impacts of projects on protected species as a condition for receiving a state permit and to those engaged in conservation projects, development planning and natural resources management as a key to responsible planning. Providing limited and confidential access to those who need it establishes this centralized database as an effective planning tool that will minimize agency workload while encouraging more efficient development and conservation planning to the benefit of both species protection and our industry's continued investment in Pennsylvania.

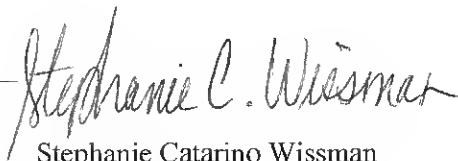
We also support the prohibition on disclosing this sensitive data to anyone other than consultants, scientists and planners associated with a proposed development or project to ensure that access to the data is truly limited and confidential.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this important piece of legislation. HB 1576 will raise the bar on threatened and endangered species protection and provide for more efficient and effective resource development by introducing consistency, transparency and accountability into the process. The MSC, API-PA and PIOGA are available at any time to discuss this legislation further.

Sincerely,



James Welty
Vice President, Government
Affairs
Marcellus Shale Coalition



Stephanie Catarino Wissman
Executive Director
Associated Petroleum
Industries of Pennsylvania



Lou D'Amico
President & Executive
Director
Pennsylvania Independent
Oil & Gas Association

cc: Chairman Gary Haluska
Chairman Greg Vitali
Members, House Game & Fisheries Committee
Members, House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee